



Presentation

Use *if* + past perfect to talk about situations that did not happen in the past. The situation described is often the opposite of what really happened. Use *would have* + past participle to talk about the hypothetical past consequences of the imagined past situation:

imagined past situation	imagined past result
<i>if</i> + past perfect If the driver <i>hadn't</i> seen the dog in time,	<i>would have</i> + past participle he'd have hit it.
Note: this is often referred to as the third conditional.	

The contracted form for both *had* and *would* is 'd:
If I'd told you, you'd have told the police.

Don't confuse the two forms. *Had* is followed by a past participle: *If I'd told you, ... = If I **had** told you, ...*

Would is followed by *have* + past participle: *You'd have told the police. = You **would** have told the police.*

would have, could have, might have

Use *would have* to describe the logical consequence of a hypothetical situation: *He **would** definitely have hit the dog (if he hadn't seen it in time).*

Use *could have* or *might have* to speculate on one of two or more possible consequences of a hypothetical past situation: *If the driver hadn't stopped in time, it **could/might** have got killed!* (= This is one possible hypothetical consequence.)

TIP You can use *couldn't have* to talk about a lack of ability in the past. In this case you cannot use *might have*, nor can you use an *if* clause: *The driver **couldn't** have reacted any quicker.* (= it was physically impossible)

Real or imaginary?

When you want to talk about a real past situation, use *if* + past simple:

*If you **knew** the dog wasn't on the lead, why didn't you warn the driver?*

*If you **knew*** = you did know.

Compare it with a sentence using *if* + past perfect:

*If I'd **known** the dog wasn't on the lead, I **would** have warned the driver.*

*If I'd **known*** = I didn't know.

You often use *if* + a real past situation to express criticism of a past action.

should have, ought to have

Use *should have* and *ought to have* to talk about the correct or morally right thing to do in a past situation. You often use these forms to criticise past actions:

*If they **couldn't** control the dog, it **shouldn't** (or **ought not to**) have been off the lead.*

*If you **knew** the dog was loose, you **ought to have** (or **should have**) warned the driver.*

1 Choose the correct options.

- 1 If I'd *arrive* / *arrived* on time, I'd *have* / *had* spoken to him before he left.
- 2 If my phone *hadn't* / *wouldn't have* run out of battery, I'd *called* / *have called* you.
- 3 I *hadn't arrived* / *wouldn't have arrived* late if my car *hadn't* / *wouldn't have* broken down.
- 4 They'd never *found out* / *have found out*, if he *hadn't* / *wouldn't have* said something.
- 5 I think we *could have* / *had* won, if we'd *try* / *tried* harder.
- 6 If you'd really *want* / *wanted* to come, you'd *found* / *have found* a way.

2 Complete the sentences about the imagined past situations.

- 1 The teacher was very angry with him because he hadn't done his homework.
The teacher wouldn't have been so angry with him if he had done his homework.
- 2 I was very tired this morning because I went to bed late last night.
If I _____ late last night, I _____ so tired this morning.
- 3 You didn't tell me it was her birthday, so I didn't bring her a present.
If you _____ her birthday, I _____ a present for her.
- 4 I passed the exam because you helped me.
I _____ the exam if you _____ me.
- 5 I didn't see you, so I didn't say hello.
I _____ hello if _____ you.
- 6 I didn't miss my train because it was delayed.
If the train _____ on time, I _____ it.

3 Complete the sentences using the verbs in the boxes.

might have would have should have

- 1 That was a very silly thing to do! You really _____ been more careful.
- 2 If I'd paid more attention, I _____ learnt something new.
- 3 If she'd won the competition, she _____ been the first woman to do so.

could have shouldn't have wouldn't have

- 4 If you'd paid more attention, you _____ got lost.
- 5 If you didn't know what you were doing, you _____ been on the boat!
- 6 That was very irresponsible. Someone _____ got hurt.

4 Write the correct form of the verbs in brackets. Then listen and check.

A: You missed a good concert last night. You really should have been there.

B: But I was!

A: If you ¹ _____ (be) there, why ² _____ (I/not/see) you?

B: I was in the gallery. If you ³ _____ (look) up, you ⁴ _____ (see) me. I waved at you, but you didn't wave back.

A: If I ⁵ _____ (not wave) back, it ⁶ _____ (be) because I couldn't see you! Why didn't you text me or something? If you ⁷ _____ (send) a text, we ⁸ _____ (go) out for a drink or something.

B: I tried, but I didn't have any credit on my phone. And anyway, I had to go home early.